



U.S. Department of Justice

Washington, D.C. 20530

MEMORANDUM

TO: Budget Staff Employees

FROM: Jolene Lauria Sullens  
Director, Budget Staff

SUBJECT: JMD Budget Staff Succession Plan

*[Handwritten signature: Jolene Sullens]*  
*[Handwritten date: 9/13/05]*

Thanks to the efforts of many Budget Staff employees, I am pleased to provide you with a copy of the first ever Budget Staff Succession Plan. This Succession Plan provides a roadmap for career development and advancement on the U.S. Department of Justice, Justice Management Division, Budget Staff. The primary goals of the Succession Plan are to provide a framework for (1) providing necessary training and development opportunities to Budget Staff employees; and (2) ensuring that qualified individuals will be available from within Budget Staff to compete for supervisory/managerial positions.

The Succession Plan requires that all Budget Staff employees have Individual Development Plans (IDP), which must be completed by October 31, 2005. To meet that deadline, supervisors and staff must work together to craft IDP's that are tailored to meet each employee's unique developmental needs. The Succession Plan contains a simple IDP format for our use.

As part of our on-going efforts to improve our Budget Staff products, at the end of our current performance period (July 1, 2005, through June 30, 2006) we will evaluate the effectiveness of the Succession Plan through your feedback. If necessary, we will make adjustments to the Succession Plan and any of its elements within 30 days following completion of the evaluation. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions about this Plan.

Attachment

cc: Lee Lofthus  
Deputy Assistant Attorney General/Controller

Debra Tomchek  
Director, Human Resources

**U.S. Department of Justice  
Justice Management Division  
Budget Staff**

**Succession Plan**

I. Introduction

This Succession Plan provides a roadmap for career development and advancement on the U.S. Department of Justice, Justice Management Division, Budget Staff thereby encouraging the retention of highly qualified staff. The primary goals of the Succession Plan are to provide a framework for (1) providing necessary training and development opportunities to Budget Staff employees; and (2) ensuring that qualified individuals will be available from within Budget Staff to compete for supervisory/managerial positions.

The Budget Staff Succession Plan is founded on three principles: *leadership*, *perspective*, and *expertise*. Specifically, the Succession Plan encourages: (1) initiative and self-management (*leadership*); (2) broad exposure to the Department of Justice, its people, and emerging ideas in the field of justice programs (*perspective*); and (3) training, short-term projects, and rotational assignments that build transferable skills (*expertise*).

The Budget Staff Succession Plan supports the President's Management Agenda initiative for the Strategic Management of Human Capital through the Accountability for People/Workforce. The Plan supports the Attorney General's Goal to provide performance-based, mission focused leadership, and to strengthen Department hiring, training, and diversity practices.

II. Budget Staff Objective

The Budget Staff's organizational objective is to establish an effective financial management workforce that supports the DOJ mission operations and provides quality, performance and value to taxpayers.

III. Elements of Plan

1. Career Progression: The Budget Staff Succession Plan supports career progression for Budget and Program Analysts (GS-9 to GS-15), Budget Technicians (GS-5 to GS-9), and Secretaries (GS-5 to GS-8).
2. Core Competencies

Successful Budget Staff employees must be competent in many areas. Several of these areas are listed and described briefly below:

- **Technical Credibility:** Understands and appropriately applies procedures, requirements, laws, regulations and policies. Demonstrates a firm knowledge of the budget and performance management processes, or other areas critical to the position.
- **Interpersonal Effectiveness:** Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and capabilities of different people in different situations. Is tactful and treats others with respect. Develops networks and collaborates with others when appropriate.
- **Influencing/Negotiating:** Persuades others. Gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals. Builds consensus.
- **Written and Oral Communications:** Expresses facts and ideas, whether in writing or orally, clearly, succinctly, convincingly, and using correct grammar and usage. Listens effectively and responds appropriately. Achieves quality end products.
- **External Awareness:** Identifies and keeps abreast of key national and international policies and economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization.

These basic “Core Competencies” complement the individual performance expectations, elements and objectives of the employee’s annual Performance Work Plan. The Core Competencies apply to all Budget Staff employees.

As employees advance to senior level grades, they are encouraged to develop the following Executive Core Qualifications of the Senior Executive Service (SES):

- Leading Change
- Leading People
- Results Driven
- Business Acumen
- Building Coalitions/Communication

The following Office of Personnel Management website contains additional information about the Executive Core Qualifications:

<http://www.opm.gov/ses/competencies.asp>.

3. **Individual Development Plan (IDP):** The IDP serves as a valuable tool in setting goals, planning resources, outlining the employee’s responsibilities, and gaining the supervisor’s commitment to the employee’s career development plans. The IDP should clearly articulate expectations, commitments, and time frames for training, rotations, and other developmental activities, as applicable. The IDP serves as the employee’s roadmap for meeting his/her learning objectives and improving upon his/her core or leadership competencies or both.

To be most effective, IDPs should be developed within 90 days of an employee’s start date. All Budget Staff IDPs must be updated annually, in

conjunction with the performance appraisal. A Budget Staff IDP template is provided at Attachment A. All IDPs should have the following elements:

- A. Career Goals: IDP should specify the employee's short-term (one to two years) and long-term (five years) career goals.
- B. Self-Assessment: The self-assessment is intended to help supervisors understand their employees' strengths, weaknesses, and developmental resource needs. In the self-assessment, the employee should answer three basic questions:
  - 1) What core or leadership competencies have you worked on improving over the past 12 months?
  - 2) What do you plan to improve on over the next 12 months?
  - 3) What developmental resources do you think you need to help you do your job better?
- C. Developmental Activities: Developmental activities should include general management areas, as well as technical skills and experiences that will improve an employee's core competencies. The IDP should specify planned formal training, on-the-job training, reading, rotational assignments, special projects, professional association conferences and seminars, etc. and provide specific timeframes for the accomplishment of each.

Budget and Program Analysts at the GS-14 and GS-15 levels may apply for further developmental opportunities via the U.S. Department of Justice's competitive SES Candidate Development Program.

- D. Training: The Budget Staff has prepared a Training Plan for Budget Staff employees, provided at Attachment B. The Training Plan identifies Introductory, Intermediate and Advanced Classes suitable at each grade level. For Budget Analysts, the classes are also consistent with the core competencies identified by the Chief Financial Officers Council and the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program.

Prior education, training, and work experience may have provided sufficient development in the areas identified; therefore, the classes are only recommended. It is also possible that senior level analysts joining the Budget Staff for the first time may need to attend some of the introductory classes specific to the processes of the U.S. Department of Justice or specific to the analyst's account responsibilities. Therefore, any employee may take any training course offered, upon the approval of his/her supervisor. The Training Plan also identifies leadership development classes to prepare employees to take on more leadership responsibilities suitable to each grade level.

Each employee is responsible for meeting the objectives outlined in his/her IDP. Although training authorization is required, the employee, with supervisor involvement, should be afforded considerable flexibility in determining the sources of his/her training (e.g., daytime course, evening course, professional seminar, annual conference or convention, etc.). Final approval to attend training is subject to a supervisor's decision on reallocation of workload coverage within the Group; however, every effort will be made to provide sufficient time for training and developmental opportunities.

The Budget Staff intends to allocate two percent of its operating funds each year to support staff training. Training is subject to the availability of funds.

Budget Staff employees must provide an evaluation of any training they attend within seven days following completion of the course. The purpose of the evaluations is to assist other staff in selecting appropriate courses. The Budget Staff Training Evaluation database is located at the following location on the shared drive: G:/ Budget Staff/Performance Group/Budget Staff Training Evaluation.

- E. Rotations: A rotation is a short-term developmental assignment (i.e., minimum of 30 days, but generally not more than 120 days in duration) that allows the employee to gain a broader perspective of the U.S. Department of Justice and/or the Federal Government. By participating in rotations, the employee may gain professional experience, work in a different occupational field, or learn about a program function from another perspective. Planned rotations should directly support the employee's learning objectives, be clearly outlined in the IDP, and be discussed with and agreed upon by the employee's immediate supervisor.

Employees with limited experience outside the Budget Staff who are interested in competing for management roles are encouraged to complete at least one rotation outside their Budget Staff Group. Such rotations could be within the Budget Staff, with Departmental components' budget offices, the JMD Finance Staff, the Office of Management and Budget, the Congress, or other entity deemed appropriate by the employee's supervisor. The rotation must advance skills and expertise to augment the employee's ability to perform in his/her position or a Budget Staff position the employee plans to seek in the future.

Rotations will only be available to employees who have either: 1) earned an Outstanding on their latest performance ratings; or 2) at the discretion of the Budget Staff Director. The exception to this rule applies to analysts who are current Presidential Management Fellows (PMF), who are required by the PMF program to complete at least one rotation during their two-year fellowship.

- F. Project Management: Employees are encouraged to volunteer to lead Budget Staff projects/processes, such as major tasks preparing the President's Budget Roll-out, Appropriations Hearing Books, Transitional Briefing Books (new AG or DAG), the Budget and Performance Summary, the Performance and Accountability Report, AG presentations, or developing and providing training (e.g. DOJ Budget Process). Senior analysts (GS-13 to GS-15) should lead or provide significant support for at least one project/process per annual performance period.
- G. Professional Associations: Participation in professional associations can be an important part of career development. Professional associations can provide the analysts opportunities for networking, training, and learning about other developmental activities. Employees are encouraged to attend relevant seminars, meetings and/or conferences hosted by such organizations. Supervisors are encouraged to provide time off for staff to attend meetings and conferences held by professional associations.
- H. Accountability: Employees and their supervisors must make every attempt to meet the learning objectives specified in the IDP by the specified timeframes. All Budget Staff IDPs must be updated annually as part of the performance appraisal process.

#### IV. Management Actions

- 1. Ensure all Budget Staff employees prepare IDPs within 60 days of the Budget Staff Director's approval of the Succession Plan.
- 2. Ensure that the Budget Staff meets its training goal by the end of the fiscal year (two percent of operating budget) and training provided is consistent with the Training Plan.
- 3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Succession Plan after one year of release by soliciting feedback from Budget Staff employees. As a result of this feedback, make adjustments to the Succession Plan and any of its elements within 30 days following completion of the evaluation.